



*Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks*

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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is a natural resource-focused organization. About 75 percent of FWP people work in the field. Activities from the biological to the administrative help to carry out FWP's mission and implement FWP Commission decisions.

There is no doubt though that the field is where the action is. State parks and fishing access sites receive 5.4 million visits each year. Parks maintenance crews keep those sites clean, safe and inviting.

Montana receives more than 2.5 million "hunter use days" each year. Behind the scenes, wildlife technicians and biologists collect and analyze information used to monitor wildlife populations and to set hunting seasons.

Montana also receives 2.8 million "angler use days" each year supported by fisheries techs and field workers who assist biologists in keeping native and wild fish populations healthy and some 500 lakes and reservoirs stocked with fish.

FWP processes about 265,000 applications each year, from nonresident big game combo licenses to permits for the Smith River float.

The FWP Field Service Division administers conservation easements and acquires new lands such as wildlife management areas.

The Information Management Division manages FWP's Web site and maintains data essential for the scientific management of fish, wildlife and parks, while the communications and education crew keeps Web visitors and the news media informed and educates new hunters and anglers.

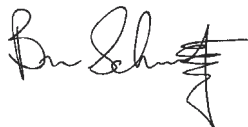
Other staff members are out of the public eye, but no less essential. Hundreds of volunteers serve in state parks, on regional citizen advisory committees and elsewhere. Roughly 1,500 adults donate their time to teach the next generation of hunters in Montana hunter education classes.

The highlights of the past year displayed here are a fragment of what those dedicated to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks mission have accomplished. We extend our personal thanks to all involved for a fine year.

JOE MAURIER, *FWP Director*



BRIAN SCHWEITZER, *Governor*





Access Montana and Habitat Montana

FWP is charged with acquiring from willing sellers critical segments of the Montana landscape for public access and enjoyment and the preservation of big game and wildlife populations. This effort now includes two major programs and a variety of funding sources.

Access Montana, a new program, provided \$10 million in funding to purchase public lands as requested by Governor Brian Schweitzer and approved by the Montana Legislature in 2007. The Habitat Montana Program annually generates \$3 million for conservation easements, leases and acquisitions, and has conserved about 273,000 acres in its 20-year existence.

Here are a few of the sites conserved for the public in the past year:

The Marias River State Park and Wildlife Management Area melds pub-

lic access to extraordinary camping and recreation with a total of 7,540 acres of wildlife habitat running along 14 miles of the Marias River. The site is 70 miles northwest of Great Falls and was purchased with Habitat Montana and Access Montana funds.

The 200-acre Yellowstone River State Park and the Yellowstone WMA, 30-miles east of Billings, total 4,000 acres. The site offers five miles of Yellowstone River frontage, cottonwood forest, ponderosa pine foothills, native grassland, a prairie dog town and access to an additional 5,000 acres of BLM and state lands. The site was purchased with Habitat Montana and Access Montana funds.

Access Montana funds also played a substantial role in the acquisition of 10 new fishing access sites statewide,

and a new state park on the north shore of Flathead Lake.

Habitat Montana funds, and the FWP Bighorn Sheep Auction Fund, were used to purchase the Bighorn Viewing Site WMA near Thompson Falls, and the Stucky Ridge WMA near Anaconda—both providing important bighorn sheep habitat.



Wildlife and hunting

Elk in Montana are managed under the guidelines contained in the Montana Elk Management Plan. The 2003 Montana legislature directed FWP to manage elk to sustain the population and consider the concerns of private landowners in determining sustainable numbers.

In a recent survey, only 43 percent of landowners agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that there are too many elk in Montana. For details and the views of others surveyed, visit the FWP Web site at fwp.mt.gov and look on the Doing Business page under Reference Materials for access to FWP's surveys.

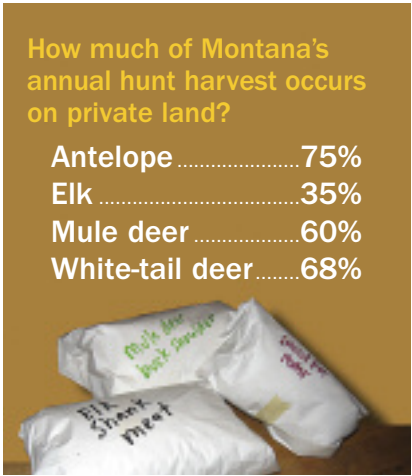
While the number of archers holds steady nationally, the number of general archery hunters in Montana has doubled in the past 20 years. In the past 10 years, the number of hunters purchasing archery-only antelope licenses has tripled.

FWP commissioners cited overcrowding, inequities between archery and rifle hunters, and diminishing hunter access to private land when they required archers to apply for permits to hunt elk and antelope in some areas. The changes affect most hunting districts in the Missouri Breaks and locations in central and eastern Montana.

The status of wolves under federal

law changed twice. Wolves were delisted in March, but federal Endangered Species Act protections were ultimately reinstated after a legal challenge. By late fall, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service renewed efforts to delist wolves in the Northern Rockies.

Urban deer are not a new species—they are deer in a new situation. With deer and humans sharing “home territories” in Montana's cities and towns, the Montana Legislature gave municipalities the authority to manage wildlife for public safety and health. FWP must still authorize public deer-control efforts such as those in Helena and Colstrip.



GOOD NEWS: The positive economic impact of hunting "trip-related" expenses is \$270 million according to FWP. Wildlife watching has an additional \$376 million impact in Montana, according to a national survey by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.



WILD TURKEY populations are expanding from core habitats and were planted in new areas. With the help of the National Wildlife Federation turkeys were placed in the west end of the Bears Paw Mountains, along the Missouri River from Ulm downstream to Fergus and Petroleum counties, and along the Milk River where there is public hunting and adequate nesting and winter habitat.



FWP.MT.GOV

WHO HUNTS? Montana has the highest per capita hunting participation in the U.S. On average, about 190,000 residents and 44,000 nonresidents hold Montana hunting licenses annually.





RESTORATION: Twelve Future Fisheries restoration projects are focused on protecting Arctic grayling in the Big Hole.



ACCESS: New fishing access sites are under development.



PARTNERSHIP: Cooperative measures are being taken to protect and restore native westlope cutthroat trout.

Aquatic life and fishing

Angler Access

The number of fishing access sites is growing. Access Montana funding has enabled FWP to acquire new public access on rivers and lakes across the state. Each new site will receive a complete environmental assessment and will open as soon as they can be readied for public use.

Native Fish Restoration

Trout Unlimited, FWP, and 16 other agencies and organizations, are cooperating to restore Montana's genetically pure westlope and Yellowstone cutthroat trout in their native habitats. Projects promote migration and spawning, protect genetically pure populations from hybridization and otherwise help restore remnant native populations.

The Future Fisheries Improvement Program committed \$380,000 specifically to habitat enhancement for cutthroat trout—and more than \$400,000 over the past two years for restoration work to benefit Arctic grayling on the Big Hole and Ruby rivers.

A conservation easement in the Blackfoot River watershed near Lincoln will protect 7,570 acres and conserve habitat for bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout in a cooperative venture

between FWP, the Five Valleys Land Trust in Missoula, The Nature Conservancy of Montana and the Sunnyslope Grazing Association.

Research on pallid sturgeon includes identifying the spawning locations of the few remaining wild adult fish and the barriers preventing successful reproduction. Scientists are also studying the survival and habitat needs of hatchery-reared juvenile fish. This research will help FWP restore habitat where necessary to help pallid sturgeon recover. Until this occurs, juvenile hatchery-reared pallid sturgeon will be stocked to help prevent the species' extinction.



PALLID STURGEON: Juvenile sturgeon are released into the Missouri River.



FISH MIGRATION: For the first time since the late 1800's, sauger, goldeye, smallmouth bass, suckers, channel catfish, minnows and other fish species can migrate up the Tongue River past the T and Y Diversion Dam. The long-awaited fish migration is due to the new Mugli Fish Passage, a 760-foot rock-lined side channel that circumvents the dam. The new fish passage, and the recent removal of the SH Diversion Dam on the Tongue, have opened about 100 river miles of potential spawning habitat to fish.

Montana's state parks, recreation and shooting ranges

To manage river recreation, FWP has hired rangers for the Missouri and Madison rivers and other waters in western Montana. Also helping maintain high-quality experiences for river users is ongoing recreation planning on rivers such as the Smith and the Blackfoot, and the administration of commercial use permits statewide.

Revenue generated by state parks pays for safety and infrastructure improvements at popular locations including Lost Creek State Park near Anaconda, Tongue River Reservoir State Park near Decker, and Giant Springs State Park in Great Falls. Construction also began on a new

visitor center at Pictograph Cave State Park near Billings.

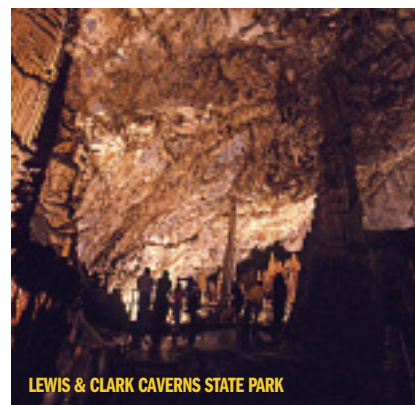
Rosebud Battlefield State Park was named a National Historic Landmark in 2008. The park management plan was approved after an 18-month public examination of the park's significance and potential.

Nearly 95,000 people participated in interpretive programs and special events in Montana State Parks in the past year.

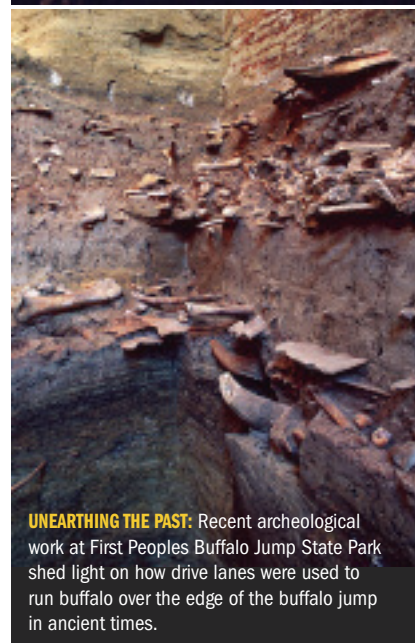
Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park marked the 75th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps with the help of 80 volunteers who built 2,500 feet of new trail in one day.



FWP AWARDED GRANTS to enhance shooting-range facilities for local shooting sports clubs and others.



LEWIS & CLARK CAVERNS STATE PARK



UNEARTHING THE PAST: Recent archeological work at First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park shed light on how drive lanes were used to run buffalo over the edge of the buffalo jump in ancient times.

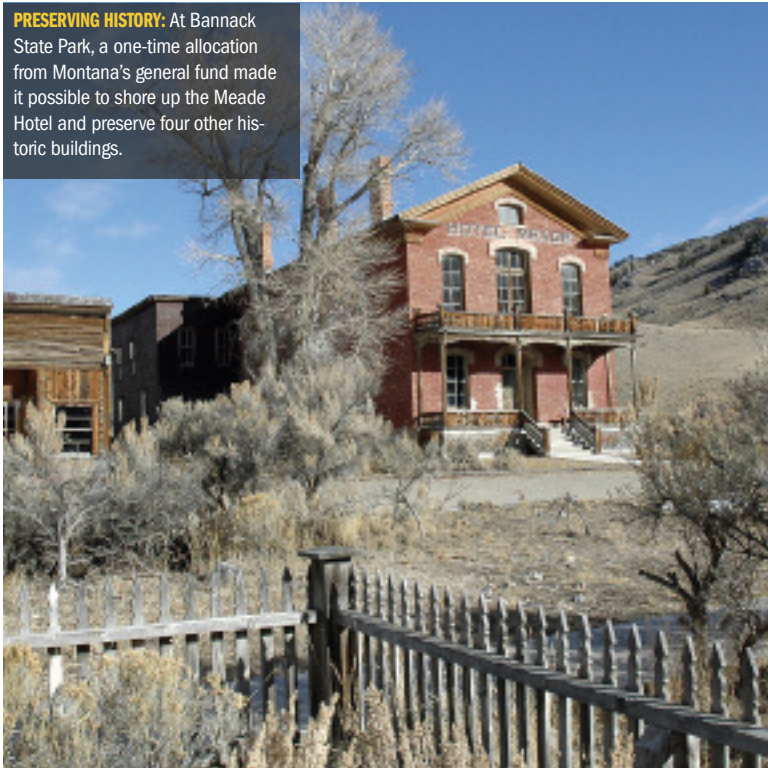


VISITOR FRIENDLY: Construction began on a new visitor center at Pictograph Cave State Park near Billings.



URBAN PARKS: Lone Pine State Park's visitor center was rededicated following installation of new exhibits, and the addition of 40 acres of land to this popular urban park near Kalispell.

PRESERVING HISTORY: At Bannack State Park, a one-time allocation from Montana's general fund made it possible to shore up the Meade Hotel and preserve four other historic buildings.





GRIZZLIES: A recently concluded study in northwestern Montana found 765 grizzly bears—more than twice the number of earlier estimates.

Protecting species' health and habitat

FWP developed its first statewide, integrated noxious weed management plan. The plan describes the prevention, early detection, and multiple remedies to be applied to FWP managed lands affected by noxious weeds. The agency will also be involved in restoration, rehabilitation, public awareness and education activities related to noxious weed management.

Northwestern Montana's grizzly population is healthy, growing and genetically diverse, according to a four-year, federally funded study in the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem. The study suggests that 765 grizzly bears inhabit the NCDE—more than twice the number estimated earlier. The \$4.8 million project was directed by the U.S. Geological Survey and carried out by FWP, the U.S. Forest Service, National Parks Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the federal Bureau of Land Management, the Blackfeet Nation, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

FWP, hunters, state and federal agencies and landowners are working together to manage the risk of brucellosis. Two cases of brucellosis were found in Montana livestock within a 12-month period, causing the state to lose its brucellosis-free status with the

U.S. Department of Agriculture. FWP expanded its monitoring for the disease and all parties are united in seeking ways to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

FWP continued monitoring for chronic wasting disease, asking hunters for samples from deer, elk and moose harvested in eastern Montana for testing. The 14,700 samples analyzed to date show no evidence of the fatal disease in Montana's wild populations.



FWP works with the Montana Department of Agriculture, Department of Livestock, Montana Health and Human Services and other agencies to classify exotic wildlife. The FWP Commission is required by law to classify exotic species as controlled,

non-controlled or prohibited and to manage permitting. Montana regulates exotic species to minimize the potential health and safety risks these species may present to humans, natural resources and agriculture.

Statewide surveys by FWP have found no new aquatic nuisance species. Prevention is FWP's focus and the species of primary concern are zebra and quagga mussels, Asian carp and Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, or

VHS virus.

The Upland Gamebird Enhancement Program puts roughly \$700,000 of hunter's dollars to work annually for habitat and pheasant release projects designed to benefit upland game birds and enhance hunting opportunities.

Connecting Montanans to the outdoors

Information technology links Montanans to FWP through the Internet at fwp.mt.gov and the agency's automated licensing system terminals at FWP regional offices and license providers. Technology is also critical for tracking and analyzing biological data. On the horizon are infrastructure updates, and projects that will help make some internal FWP processes more efficient.

FWP hosted a joint conference of the Organization of Wildlife Planners and the National Association of Recreation Resource Planners in Missoula. Recreation and wildlife planners viewed this first joint meeting as a step toward closer collaboration on wildlife and recreation planning.

FWP planned and hosted the Montana Children and Nature Summit in Helena. Local, state and federal land and recreation resource managers, health care professionals, educators, and representatives of nonprofit groups and private industry discussed the importance of reconnecting children with nature. Local groups are planning similar meetings around the state to find new ways to introduce young people to Montana's outdoors.

Discover Montana's Ecosystems debuted on the Internet to rave reviews. This series of interactive, ani-

mated Web pages is a teaching tool that meets the state's science curriculum standards for K-12 students while appealing to people of all ages interested in Montana's diverse ecosystems and how they function. To participate, visit the FWP Web site at fwp.mt.gov and select *Discover Montana's Ecosystems* on the Education page.



The Becoming an Outdoors Woman program continues to introduce women to outdoor skills such as fishing, shooting, archery, map and compass reading, survival, canoeing and outdoor cooking. To learn more, go to the FWP Web site at fwp.mt.gov and look for Outdoors Woman on the Education page.



Law enforcement

TIP-MONT, the FWP crimestopper program, awarded nearly \$15,000 to 27 individuals who called the 1-800- TIP-MONT number and reported tips that led to the apprehension of violators.

FWP's enforcement division surveyed hunters, anglers, park users, and others to learn how they view game wardens and the enforcement program. Questionnaires were sent to 962 Montanans recently in contact with a game warden. More than 500 surveys were returned. Overall, 92 percent of the respondents viewed their experience in the field with a FWP warden as "positive" or "very positive."

More law enforcement survey results:

	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	TOTAL
Professional	33%	61%	94%
Courteous	29%	68%	97%
Knowledgeable	34%	58%	92%
Fair	32%	64%	96%
Friendly	27%	71%	98%

Read more about this survey in *Montana Outdoors* magazine, November–December 2008



FWP on the Internet

An insatiable appetite for news and information about Montana's fish, wildlife and state parks attracted visitors from more than 170 countries around the world to view over 13 million pages on the FWP Web site at fwp.mt.gov. The most often used pages:

- FWP's Automated Licensing Service (ALS)
- License- and permit-related information
- The Hunt Planner
- Montana Fishing Guide
- Searches for information on public lands including wildlife management areas, fishing access sites, state parks and fish hatcheries
- Hunting information on licensing, regulations, seasons and ALS numbers
- News

Nearly 60 percent of FWP's Web visitors have been to the site in the past. More than half of Web visitors are retrieving hunting-related information.



Revenue Sources

Hunting And Fishing Licenses

This revenue source includes all license sales, interest earnings and miscellaneous revenues. Nonresident sales account for approximately two-thirds of license revenue.

Federal Revenue

More than \$8.2 million comes from an excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition, handguns and certain archery equipment (Pittman-Robertson). An additional \$9.4 million in federal funding comes from an excise tax on fishing equipment and electric trolling motors, a federal fuel tax, and import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats (Wallop-Breaux). Montana received about \$1 million from the federal State Wildlife Grant program to help fund research and management programs for species that have special conservation needs.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund provided additional federal funding for State and local parks.

Other State Revenue

Other state revenue sources include: a portion of the state's lodging facilities use tax, a small percentage of the state fuel tax, a portion of light vehicle registration fees, nonresident state parks fees, and interest earnings from coal severance tax receipts.

State General Fund

For the first time since 2001, FWP has received state general fund assistance for fisheries and wildlife programs to match federal State Wildlife Grants. Montanans are also benefiting from a \$10 million one-time general fund appropriation for the purchase of hunting, fishing and recreation access.

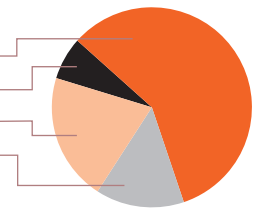
Special Funding

- License revenues provide about 58 percent of FWP's total operating budget .
- In fiscal year 2008, nonresident license sales accounted for about two-thirds of total license revenues.
- Federal funds account for more than 22 percent of the overall budget for use in fisheries and wildlife restoration efforts and for parks development and maintenance, boating safety, education and regulation.
- The State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program helps states integrate monitoring and management of all fish and wildlife species, and to implement FWP's Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy. FWP received \$1.08 million in funding from this federal program in 2008.

2009 PROJECTED BUDGET

This illustration shows how FWP is funded. Actual annual revenues may fall above or below the figures used here:

Hunting and Fishing Licenses	\$51,310,192	58.4%
General Fund	\$5,940,000	6.7%
Federal Funds	\$18,122,399	20.6%
Other State Revenue	\$12,559,650	14.3%
TOTAL FUNDS:	\$87,932,241	100%



Planned Expenditures

- Habitat Montana includes several programs that benefit wildlife habitat as listed below:

House Bill 526: designates a portion of hunting license money for land acquisition\$3,300,000

Upland Game Bird Habitat Enhancement Program\$600,000

Migratory Bird Habitat Enhancement\$281,000

One Bighorn Sheep License Auction*\$175,500

One Moose License Auction*\$11,250

One Mountain Goat License Auction*\$8,100

One Elk License Auction*\$15,300

One Mule Deer Auction*\$11,700

*amount after 10 percent went to the auctioning organization

FWP SPENDS ITS MONEY TWO WAYS:

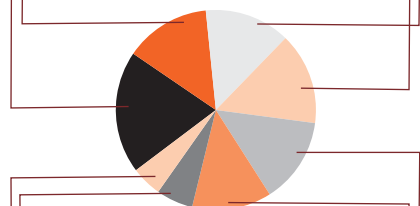
Operations: Day-to-day management of Montana's fish, wildlife and parks resources. The pie chart below illustrates FWP's operating expenditures.

Capital: Major repair and maintenance of FWP properties, renovation and construction of facilities, and protection, enhancement and acquisition of critical habitats.

Operations	\$70,636,241
Capital	\$17,296,000
Total	\$87,932,241

HOW OPERATING EXPENDITURES ARE USED:

Fisheries	19%
Wildlife	15%
Management & Finance	14%
Parks	14%



Field Services	14%
Enforcement	13%
Information Services	6%
Communications & Education	5%

In 2008, FWP made more than \$500,000 in property-tax payments to 38 counties as required by state law.



READ MORE ABOUT MONTANA FWP:

For the third time in the past four years, *Montana Outdoors* was named the nation's top state conservation magazine by the Association for Conservation Information. *Montana Outdoors* is FWP's full-color magazine featuring the latest information on conservation issues, new management programs, and fishing, hunting, and parks recreation. A one-year subscription (six issues) is \$9. Call toll-free (800) 678-6888, or subscribe on-line at: www.fwp.mt.gov/mtoutdoors

MONTANA FWP ON THE WEB:

www.fwp.mt.gov

FWP MISSION

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations.

Governor of the State of Montana

Brian Schweitzer

FWP Director

Joe Maurier

FWP Commission

Steve Doherty, Chairman
Great Falls

Dan Vermillion
Livingston

Shane Colton
Billings

Vic Workman
Whitefish

Willie Doll
Malta

For more information, visit: fwp.mt.gov

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